

REGULAR MEETING – MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
March 8, 2010

Mayor Elizabeth Paterson called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Audrey P. Beck Building.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Haddad, Keane, Lindsey, Moran, Paterson, Paulhus, Ryan,
Schaefer Excused: Kochenburger

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2010 Special meeting as presented. The motion passed with all in favor except Mayor Paterson who abstained. Ms. Moran moved and Ms. Keane seconded to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2010 meeting as presented. The motion passed with all in favor except Mayor Paterson who abstained.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Bill Powers, Ellise Road, spoke in favor of the Council reciting the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of each meeting.

Mike Sikoski, Wildwood Road, questioned the appropriateness of the Town chili fest.

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, commented on a number of topics. Statement attached.

David Freudmann, Eastwood Road, stated he was chagrined to see the farm building tax exemption on the agenda, given the economy.

IV. REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER

Statement attached

Town Manager Matthew Hart thanked Assistant to the Town Manager Maria Capriola for her work on the Citizen Budget Guide 2010. He also announced that the Windham Special Olympics will be held on March 13th starting at 10 a.m. The Town Manager expressed his support for the chili fest noting that this is one of several activities the Town supports to help provide a positive work environment and that employees use their own time to participate in these events.

V. REPORTS AND COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Paterson announced the School Building Committee will hold an informational session on March 15th at the Mansfield Middle School at 7:00 p.m. to update residents on their progress.

By consensus the Council agreed to move Item 4, Presentation: Open Space as the next item of business.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Community/Campus Relations

The Town University Relation Committee will meet on March 9th at 4:00 p.m. to hear a presentation on the Storrs Center Streetscape Project. The Town Manager also announced the Committee on Community Quality of Life voted in favor of a change in the definition of family in the PZC regulations and will forward this proposed recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

2. Community Water and Wastewater Issues

The Four Corners Sewer and Water Advisory Committee will be meeting on March 9th at 7:00 p.m. and has invited various environmental advocacy groups.

3. An Ordinance Providing a Tax Exemption for Farm Buildings

Ms. Keane moved and Ms. Lindsey seconded to refer the proposed ordinance to the Ad Hoc Ordinance Development and Review Committee.

Council members discussed the advisability of broadening the approach to include a review of what the Town could do to promote sustainable farming in general.

Ms. Keane and Ms. Lindsey amended the motion to refer the issue to the Agriculture Committee. By consensus the Council agreed to the amendment and the motion to approve the amended motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Haddad asked that the Agriculture Committee keep the Council advised of any budgetary impacts their proposals might have so the Council will be able to evaluate the proposed changes during the budget review process.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

4. Presentation: Open Space

Program Parks Coordinator Jennifer Kaufman in concert with Jim Morrow, Vicki Wetherell, Ken Feathers and Steve Lowry representing the Open Space Preservation Committee, Quentin Kessel representing the Conservation Commission, and Sue Harrington representing the Parks Advisory Committee explained the processes involved and the value of the open space program in the Town. Speakers described how each of their committees have and continue to work individually and collectively to preserve resources and features of value to the community and environment.

On behalf of the Council Mayor Paterson thanked the committee members for their work commenting that this is a good example of how volunteers can contribute and make a difference to the Town.

5. Proposed Open Space Acquisition – Ossen Property

Mr. Haddad moved and Ms. Keane seconded to schedule a public hearing for 7:30 PM at the Town Council's regular meeting on March 22, 2010, to solicit public comment regarding the proposed purchase of the Ossen property on Birchwood Heights Road.

Motion passed unanimously.

6. ARRA, Stimulus Projects

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded to approve the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, that Matthew W. Hart, Town Manager, is hereby authorized to sign the agreement entitled: Agreement between the State of Connecticut and the Town of Mansfield for the Construction, Inspection and Maintenance of the Birch Road Bikeway Phase II utilizing Federal Funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Public Law 11-5(hereinafter "Act").

RESOLVED, that Matthew W. Hart, Town Manager, is hereby authorized to sign the agreement entitled: Agreement between the State of Connecticut and the Town of Mansfield for the Construction, Inspection, and Maintenance of Mansfield City Road Pavement Preservation utilizing Federal Funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Public Law 111-5.

Motion passed unanimously

7. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for fiscal Year 2008-09

Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded, effective March 8, 2010, to accept the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2008-09, as endorsed by the Finance Committee.

Motion moved unanimously.

VIII. DEPARTMENTAL AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

No Reports

IX. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Mr. Ryan, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported the Committee reviewed the audit report and noted that the report was very complimentary to the work of the Town's Finance Department. The auditor's suggestions were accepted by the Department. A presentation on possible fees for rescue services was made to the Committee and will be discussed at a later date.

Ms. Moran, Chair of the Committee on Committees, moved to retroactively appoint Nancy Silander to the University/Town Relations Committee as of November 2009. Motion passed unanimously. Ms. Moran also reported the Committee will be conducting a mini campaign to expand the cadre of volunteers.

Mr. Haddad, Chair of the Personnel Committee, suggested the office hours for Council members, as approved in the newly adopted Rules of Procedures, needs additional structure. The Town Manager will notice the office hours and Mr. Haddad suggested a schedule of Council volunteers be developed. Ms. Moran and Ms. Keane will staff the next session

X. PETITIONS, REQUEST AND COMMUNICATIONS

8. D. Dorfer re: Toddler Time program
9. M. Hogan re: D. Morse letter to the Mansfield Town Council E. Paterson re: Town of Mansfield FY 2011 Appropriations Request – “Four Corners” Water and Sewer Project
10. Four School Building Project Questions and Answers

11. Town Council Rules of Procedure
12. MORE Commission Recommendations
13. State of CT, Department of Economic and Community Development re: Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals List
14. CCM re: Thank you
15. Community Bike Drive
16. Chronicle "Rep. Merrill makes her bid official" – 2-16-10
17. Chronicle "Mansfield Council forms ordinance subcommittee" – 2-17-10
18. Chronicle "CT Water purchases water system in Mansfield" – 2-18-10
19. Chronicle "Council to meet legislators tonight" – 2-22-10
20. Chronicle "Three nabbed as police break up Mansfield pot den" – 2-22-10
21. Chronicle "Council puts off stand on pol sign rules" – 2-23-10
22. Chronicle "Mansfield Council ducks request to recite Pledge" – 2-23-10
23. Chronicle "Buckman seeks Merrill's seat" – 2-25-10
24. Chronicle "Haddad also to seek seat in 54th District" – 2-26-10
25. Chronicle "It's cold outside...and chili inside" – 2-26-10
26. Chronicle "Letters to the Editor" – 2-26-10/3-3-10
27. Chronicle "Editorial: We offer these threads, needles" – 3-1-10
28. Mansfield Today "School project update airs on cable in March" – 2-24-10

XI. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, objected to the vending machines and refrigerators noting they were expensive and inconsistent with the Town's wellness program. Ms. Wassmundt has also concluded the Town Council/Town Manager form of government is not in the interest of the public and asked the Council to provide fiduciary oversight for the Town.

Mike Siskoski, Wildwood Road, attended the Finance Committee meeting and disagrees with fees for rescue services. He also objects to the Public Works policy regarding equipment use.

XII. FUTURE AGENDAS

No comments

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Ryan seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor

Mary Stanton, Town Clerk